



State of Washington  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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To Interested Parties:

The enclosed packet includes: Two summary sheets of regulations governing the 2011 Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor commercial fishing seasons, WAC 220-22-020 describing the commercial boundaries, maps of each harbor with commercial boundary lines, and a summary describing the live box dimensions.

Final regulations have been adopted and will be published under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) prior to the 2011 Fall Commercial Salmon management period. Items of special note are identified below.

**Willapa Bay Fall Fishery** – The most significant change to this year's fishery is in the Catch Reporting Areas. This includes changes in letters, the formation of new areas, and changes in area boundaries. Due to all of the databases we report to both internally and externally, we had to retire the letters G, H, and J. Replacing those are T, U, and R, respectively. The other significant change is the division of Areas 2T (formerly 2G) and 2R (formerly 2J) as well as the extension of Area 2U (formerly 2H). Area 2T was divided into 2T north of Leadbetter Point and the remaining area south of Leadbetter Point is now the new Area 2N. Area 2R was separated into 2R north of Nahcotta and the area south of Nahcotta is now the new Area 2P. Area 2U has been extended upstream to the Hwy 101 Bridge and downstream to Range Marker "B" between Channel Markers 26 and 28. **Please refer to enclosed WAC 220-22-020 and map for written descriptions of the new areas and changes in boundaries. Please also remember that when reporting catch in Willapa Bay, you need to report the NEW area letter to the buyer.**

Beginning August 29, the release of ALL wild (unmarked) Chinook, non-legal sturgeon, and ALL steelhead is **required**. Live boxes are **required** to be used when release of wild (unmarked) Chinook is required and soak time is limited to 45 minutes. During October, in addition to release requirements for wild (unmarked) Chinook, ALL chum are also required to be released. Mesh size varies depending on date.

This year, a 60 hour Summer Salmon fishery in all Willapa Bay commercial gillnet areas is scheduled for August 8-11. Two 12 hour openers near the end of August through September 1 are limited to Areas 2N and 2U. Two 12 hour days in early September and those are limited to Areas 2N, 2R, and 2U. The maximum mesh size allowed in August and early September is 9-inches. The September 13 – 23 opener is limited to a maximum mesh size of 6-inches. Beginning September 24, the maximum mesh size allowed is 6 ½ -inches. During November mesh size is a 9-inch minimum for all areas, except from 6 pm November 11 through 6 pm November 19, when either 9-inch minimum mesh OR 6 ½- inch maximum mesh is allowed. Only ONE net of either 6 ½- inch and smaller or 9-inch and larger may be used when in the act of fishing.

**Grays Harbor Fall Fishery** – In Area 2C, ALL wild (unmarked) coho, non-legal sturgeon, and ALL steelhead must be released. The mesh size allowed in August and September is 7 ½ -inch minimum to 9-inch maximum. The maximum mesh size allowed in October is 9-inches. Live boxes are **required** for the release of wild (unmarked) coho and soak time is limited to 45 minutes. Notice of Intent to fish is required to the Quick Reporting phone, fax, or email prior to 12 pm August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 for fishing in August and September and prior to 12 pm October 18, 2011 for fishing in October.

In Areas 2A/2D, ALL Chinook, non-legal sturgeon, and ALL steelhead must be released. Prior to October 20, the maximum mesh size allowed is 6-inches, no more than 55 meshes deep. After October 20, the maximum mesh size is 6 ½ inches. Live boxes are **required** for the release of ALL Chinook and soak time is limited to 45 minutes. Notice of Intent to fish is required to the Quick Reporting phone, fax, or email prior to 12 pm October 4, 2011.

Fishers in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor must carry an on-board observer, if requested by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). It is also **required** that all operators of commercial salmon vessels planning to fish in Willapa Bay and/or Grays Harbor this year complete a “Fish Friendly” workshop and have in their possession a WDFW-issued certification card to participate in salmon openings. Operators who do not currently already hold a “Fish Friendly” certification card need to contact Barbara McClellan at (360) 249-1213 at the Region 6 Montesano office to sign up and make arrangements to attend a class.

**Washington Administrative Code for these fisheries is available at the following websites:**

Grays Harbor - <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=220-36>

Willapa Bay - <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=220-40>

A new method of measuring white sturgeon is **required** statewide as of January 1, 2009. This new method measures FORK LENGTH, from the tip of the nose to the FORK of the tail with the fish on its side. The new legal fork length size limit is **43 – 54 inches**. Fork length is easier to measure both for the angler and for enforcement and reduces handling time of the fish.

The southern population of green sturgeon was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act effective July 6, 2006. Most green sturgeon captured in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor fisheries are from the southern population. Therefore, **the retention of green sturgeon is prohibited to protect this federally listed stock. Fishers encountering green sturgeon are requested to report these encounters through quick reporting (see below), including the area where the encounters occurred and the date of encounters.**

Wholesale dealers and fishers retailing their fish should note that “Quick Reporting” of catch is **required** for all salmon and sturgeon landed; this includes all “take home” catch. All purchases are required to be reported to WDFW by 10:00 A.M. of the day following the commercial landing. **The Quick Reporting requirement does not preclude the obligation of buyers to report catches on fish tickets.** Reports can be made by:

- fax (360) 249-1229
- telephone 1-866-791-1280
- email [harborfishtickets@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:harborfishtickets@dfw.wa.gov)

The Quick Reporting summary must include: the dealer’s name, purchasing location, date of purchase, list of fish ticket numbers used on the purchasing date (including **alpha letter** preceding the fish ticket number), commercial fishing gear type, catch area, species, number and total weight of fish. Please note that a copy of the “Statewide Quick Reporting Summary Sheet” has been included for your convenience or you can go to our website and download a copy at: [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/commercial/quickreport\\_form.xls](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/commercial/quickreport_form.xls)

You are advised to call the Department of Fish and Wildlife hotline at (360) 902-2500 or (360) 249-4628 before going fishing to verify fishery schedules and regulations. For additional information or questions, please contact Barbara McClellan (360) 249-1213 or Charmane Ashbrook at (360) 249-1205 the Region 6, Montesano office.